

B1
cont'd

- bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;
- applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;
- withdrawing the backing layer; and
- causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the varnish layer and the decoration layer both remain on an external surface of the article after the transfer.

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24/ (Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article.

Please add new claims 26-41 as follows:

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26/ A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

· supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

· bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

· applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

· withdrawing the backing layer; and

· causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article.--

--27/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish used is a UV thermal varnish.--

--28/ A method according to claim 27, wherein the varnish used is a cationic UV thermal varnish.--

--29/ A method according to claim 27, wherein the varnish used is a hydroxylated urethane acrylate UV thermal varnish.--

--30/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes oligomers of low molecular weight.--

--31/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish contains a solvent prior to being applied to the backing layer.--

--32/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes at least one of a pigment or a dye.--

--33/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes photo-initiators at a concentration by weight that lies in the range from about 0.3% to about 3%.--

--34/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the backing layer comprises a polyester film.--

--35/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the decoration layer is covered in a layer of hot-melt adhesive.--

--36/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish layer is exposed to said radiation while temperature thereof is still close to maximum temperature thereof at the moment when pressure and heat are applied to the backing layer, the temperature difference being less than 30% of the maximum temperature.--

--37/ A method according to claim 26, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of metal deposited under a vacuum onto the layer of varnish before the varnish is exposed to said radiation.--